

WALKING IN THE LIGHT OF THE LORD

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A SERMON
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“O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”
Isaiah 2:5

We may regard this invitation, first of all, as addressed to the Jews. According to the preceding verses, the Gentiles are to be brought in, “And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” Then, after that, finding the Jews still alienated from God, the Gentiles will turn to them and say, “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

Now, in a measure, this prophecy has already been fulfilled and the evidence of its fulfillment is before your very eyes at this moment. Multitudes of us Gentiles, whom the Jews only regarded as dogs and outcasts, have been converted to the faith of Christ and adopted into the family of God. So now, my brethren, we ought to have very great tenderness of heart towards the older branch of the family—the seed of Abraham, the house of Jacob, the children of Israel, who, for the most part, still reject our Lord Jesus Christ and remain outside the pale of His church.

A Christian is the last person who ought to ever speak disrespectfully or unkindly of the Jews. We remember that our Lord belonged to that race and that His first apostles were also of that nation. And we regard that ancient people as the very aristocracy of mankind, tracing back their pedigree to those before whom the mightiest kings might well veil their faces, and bow in lowliest homage, for I reckon that to be descended from Abraham, “the friend of God,” and “the father of the faithful,” is to have a lineage higher than that of any of the princes of the earth.

Let us pray to God continually for the ingathering of the Jews. They are the original branches of the good olive tree, although for a time they have been cut off because of unbelief. And we, who were only wild olive shoots, have been grafted into their places. Shall we boast and exalt ourselves over them? Nay, for we also seem to be of the house of Jacob—he was rightly called Jacob, that, is, a supplanter, for he supplanted his brother Esau, and we have supplanted the Jews and have thus become Jacobs to those who are Jacob’s seed.

Yet, they are to be grafted again into the olive tree, and it is according to the mind of Christ that we should pray and labor for their conversion, and long for that happy time when they shall be brought in and with the fullness of the Gentiles, be gathered at the feet of the Messiah whom they have so long rejected.

Having said this, which was necessary to explain the text—for we must never forget the literal meaning of any passage of God’s Word, even when we are fully justified in spiritualizing it—I am now free to speak of the spiritual seed of Israel, for to them also this message comes, “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” Here is, first, *an invitation* upon which we will think

for a while. And then, when we have thought of it, *let us accept it*, and let us endeavor now and throughout the rest of our lives, God helping us, to “walk in the light of the LORD.”

I. First, then, HERE IS AN INVITATION.

When a man receives an invitation, he naturally inquires from whom it comes. So we observe, first, that this invitation comes to us *from those to whom we have ministered aforetime*. The literal seed of Jacob had kept God’s lamp alight in the world, and other nations had seen that light—and it afterwards turned out that those very nations, which had been enlightened by the Jews, said to them, “Oh house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

It should greatly encourage us, dear friends, whenever we hear any, whose conversion we have been seeking, say to us, “Come and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” You who have been blessed in turning sinners to Christ will bear witness with me that there is scarcely any joy, out of heaven, that equals the delight of hearing a sinner express his willingness to come to Christ and so to “walk in the light of the LORD.”

I distinctly recollect the first person who ever told me that I had been the means of her conversion. I remember the little cottage in which she dwelt, for she was a poor woman who resided in an obscure village. Her testimony was to me the sweetest music I had ever heard, with the exception of my Savior’s voice when I myself was saved by His grace. I felt then that I must go on preaching, for this was a seal, set to my commission, for which I blessed the Lord day and night. I can recall at this moment the intense delight I had in listening to that good woman’s cheering words. I do not know that I have had so much joy over any score of converts since as I had over that first one. That is a very natural feeling, you know. What a fuss is generally made over the first child in a family! So it is it with our first converts—we do rejoice exceedingly over them.

Still, dear friends, however many spiritual children God may have given to us, all whom we have been the means of introducing into the kingdom of Christ are very precious to us. And when we hear them say, “Yes, we will go with you, for we perceive that God is with you. We will walk in the light in which you are walking,” we feel very greatly encouraged and we resolve that we will persevere in such blessed service. This is the reward of our labor for the Lord. This is the harvest that the husbandman, who sows the seed for Christ, desires to reap. If you have never had this joy, work on till you do have it. If you have had it, I need not tell you to work on—I think you can never leave off such blessed service.

I remember well the story of a man who died some few years ago, who had saved a young man from drowning and after rescuing that one from a watery grave, he seemed as if he was insatiable to do the same thing again and again. I think it was eight persons he rescued, one after another at Hull. He would stand by the dock, in a dangerous place, watching that he might be at hand in case anyone fell into the water. He died, at last, in the very act of saving another person’s life—he seemed to be carried away with that passion. In like manner, I would have all the saint’s of God encouraged, as they bring one and another to Christ, to consecrate their whole time and strength to this glorious—this divine pursuit of bringing men to the Lord Jesus Christ—a work which might fill an angel’s heart and which did fill the Savior’s hands.

So the invitation in our text may be looked upon as a great encouragement, for it comes from those to whom we have ministered.

But if I read this invitation aright, it comes also *from new converts*, for, according to the context, many Gentiles had just gone up to the house of God, saying, “He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths,” and when they had said that to one another, they turned to the Jews and said, “O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

I think it is a very pleasing thing when our new converts begin to exhort us and invite us to join with them in special acts of devotion. Yet, while it is very pleasing in some respects, it sometimes brings to us a measure of rebuke. I remember how it was with me when, in the earnestness of my young heart’s affection for the Lord Jesus Christ, I spoke to some of the older Christians around me and they tried to snuff me out. A liberal supply of wet blankets was generally kept in store, in certain quarters, and

brought into use whenever I went round that way. I survived that operation, however, and now that I am myself getting old, when some enthusiastic young spirit begins to wake me up, I hope I shall not quench his ardor by throwing a wet blanket over him.

When we commence our Christian life, we are full of earnestness and zeal, and we think that we can drive the church before us—and drag the world after us, but by-and-by, we settle down to a much quieter state of things. I think it is a great blessing when the new converts come in among us and stir us up from our sluggishness, and make us move with something of the enthusiasm that we had in our younger days. I pray God continually to send among us many earnest men and women who shall lovingly reprove us if we are lukewarm. We constantly need the infusion of new life and so far from discouraging zeal, we will do all we can to encourage it.

The other day I heard that a young man had said a very foolish thing for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was said to be so foolish a thing that everybody condemned it. I sent for the speaker to come to see me, for when a man boldly says, “I believe that such-and-such a thing is true, and I am going to act upon it, although everybody else says, ‘You are a simpleton,’” that is the kind of man in whom my heart delights, for I am sure that there is something in him if he is willing to be counted singular because he believes he is following Christ Jesus his Lord. May God send us many such simpleminded, true-hearted, warm-blooded Christians to keep the church from getting cold and lethargic!

Once more, it seems to me that this invitation comes *from those who seek after mutual edification*. Some had come into the house of God and had learned His ways, so they turned round to others, and said, “Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” They did not say, “Go ye,” but they said, “‘Come ye,’ we wish you to come with us. Let us walk together in the light of the Lord.”

Dear friends, I beg you continually to practice this holy work of mutual exhortation, stirring one another up to greater devotion to our Savior and His service. We do not think it wise to have public meetings of this kind, because such gatherings are apt to be like the Irish school, where they had not any schoolmaster, and nobody knew anything, and they taught one another! That is the general style of things where everybody speaks, or when the meeting is more profitable, it is because there are one or two present who really are the instructors of the rest, even though they may not nominally be called so.

But without meeting with this special object and design, all Christians should be constantly stirring one another up whenever the opportunity of doing so occurs. The moment you yourself get liberty in prayer, call in a brother to pray with you. When you feel very happy and full of praise to God, tell some dear friend that you want to sing, and ask him to come and sing with you. You go into a neighbor’s house to ask his help when you have a burden of care or sorrow resting upon you, then go and ask for his sympathy when your heart is full of joy. Tell him that you cannot sufficiently bless God by yourself and that you want him as your friend and brother in Christ to aid you in the sweet labor of thanksgiving.

O dear brothers and sisters, I beg you to seek to know one another more and more, and mix with one another with the view of helping each other’s faith and love! You can scarcely imagine how much you may get from one another by this kind of mutual communion. The commerce of nations enriches and is to the advantage of all who share in it. And the spiritual unity of Christians, making a holy interchange of knowledge, and feeling, and sympathy, will tend to the enrichment of all. In such a church as ours, there ought to be no difficulty in finding kindred spirits with whom you can have holy and helpful fellowship. As soon as you do find them, say to them, “Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

II. Now I turn to the second head which is, LET US ACCEPT THE INVITATION. I do not want to say much about it except to urge you at once to accept it.

“Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.” What does this invitation mean? First, I think it means, *let us make use of that light*. Writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, John tells us that, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.” My brother, in his prayer just now, very sweetly prayed that God might be to each one of us all that He is, and that is exactly what I want you all to realize, so that, as God is light, He may be light to you, and that we, who are His people, may practically, in our

daily lives, walk in the very light of God and not have a religion locked up, like a diamond bracelet, but may wear it as we wear our everyday garments. That we may not have it like a choice lamp hidden away in a vault, but may have the light of it shining on our every footstep.

Let us “walk in the light of the LORD” *so as to have an absolute certainty about the things which we believe*. Have you ever tried to walk in the light of anybody else? I have not. I never thought it worth my while to do so. I hear sometimes of wonderful new lights that have appeared, but I usually find that they only arise from some crazy-brained individual who has no light to spare. Then I occasionally hear of others who give out a sort of phosphorescent light through some new discoveries of theirs, or the cogitations of their massive minds.

And every now and then someone says, “Have you heard that Dr. So-and-so has discovered that the Book of Genesis is wrong? Have you heard that a wonderful arithmetician has found out that there are mistakes in the Book of Numbers?” “Oh, yes,” I answer. “I have heard that the Bible is all wrong from Genesis to Revelation. Or if there is a verse in the Scriptures that the learned infidels have not yet assailed, some fool or other will attack it before long.”

If I am asked, “Are you quite sure about the truth of this Book?” I reply, “Yes, I am quite sure, for I believe entirely in the inspiration of the Bible, and I know that whatever is in that Book is certainly true.” Everybody believes in infallibility somewhere. A Romanist believes in an infallible Pope and a great philosopher believes in his infallible self—he knows that he is right.

I believe in this infallible Book and in the infallible God. And I ask any of you who are troubled, and worried, and tossed to and fro because of what some heretic or skeptic has said, to “walk in the light of the LORD,” and to be perfectly satisfied as to the revelation He has given us in His Word. This Book has been tested and tried for many centuries, and it has never been found wanting. Its light has never been quenched. It shines, if possible, even more brightly, today, than it ever did before. I mean that some of the mists and clouds that hovered round it, have been scattered.

This lamp is and always must be the only one to guide men to heaven, for this is the one that God Himself has lighted and all the devils in hell can never blow it out. If all the doctrines of the Bible are assailed, and all its precepts are rejected, and all its records are attacked, and all its promises are contradicted, it need not signify to us as much as the turn of a hair. If we have accepted it as a revelation from God, we may be quite sure as to all that it contains, and therein our spirits may find absolute rest. Come away from the shadow of the dark cloud of unbelief and come out into the everlasting light of God. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for “if you will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.”

The next sense in which we are to “walk in the light of the LORD” is to realize God’s presence and in consequence, *to feel our conscience perfectly at ease*. I mean this—here is a Christian man who has been doing his best for God, yet somebody suspects his motives and misrepresents his actions. Where he expected to receive approbation, he receives condemnation. He is evidently misunderstood and as far as his fellows are concerned, he is under a cloud. What is that man to do? Why, just say, “My God, You know everything. You know with what singleness of heart I have served You, and with what purity of mind I have walked before You. And I appeal from the unjust verdict of man to the Judge of all the earth, for I am sure that You will judge righteously.” It is wonderful what peace of mind is enjoyed by those who “walk in the light of the LORD.”

Perhaps somebody writes you a stinging letter. Possibly another brings against you a lying accusation. One sneers and another laughs at you, but what does it all matter if you are walking in the light of the Lord? You can live above them all and say, “I am not a servant of men, but a servant of God. I appear not before the judgment seat even of my fellow Christians, but I stand to be judged by Him who shall judge the quick and the dead. And since my heart condemns me not, I have confidence that God, who is greater than my heart, will also justify me.” You will need this kind of feeling, especially if you are called to lead the way and to serve God above others. God grant that you may have it to the very largest extent that is possible!

Now think of another meaning in the text—that is this. It is a blessed thing to “walk in the light of the LORD” and so to obtain *instruction for the judgment*. Light is constantly used in Scripture as the figurative representation of knowledge, just as darkness is the emblem of ignorance. My brothers and sisters who know the Lord, I pray you to study God’s Word very deeply.

I speak specially to some of you who have lately come in from the world and who confess that you know very little of the Bible. You had not godly parents. You were not brought up in the ways of religion and some of you, as lately as six months ago, did not go to any place of worship at all—but God, in the sovereignty of His grace, has now brought you in among His children. So, be diligent students of His Word. Meditate upon it day and night, for then shall you be “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither.” Do not care so much about all other books in the world as about the Word of God. Drink continually at the fountainhead.

You have heard, I daresay, of the Irishman who was converted to Christ, and whose priest told him that he had better not read the Bible, because it had done so much mischief to unlearned readers, adding, “I will give you the milk of the Word, and will bring it to you.” “Well, sir,” said Pat, “I will be very much obliged to you if you will do so, but still, I mean to keep a cow myself, and so I shall be sure to get the milk pure.”

That is the right thing for you also to do—keep a cow yourself. When you come here, I will do my best to give you the unadulterated milk of the Word. Still, I would advise you to also keep a cow yourselves. Carry a lactometer with you and see whether the milk is genuine. I like people who test and try everything we bring before them by the Word of God. I want you to do it and I would rather that you had no preacher at all than that you should neglect to search the Scriptures. There is divine light in the Word of God, therefore, “walk in the light of the LORD.”

Do not think, dear Christian friends, that you cannot understand what is in the Word of God. The Holy Spirit has promised to teach us. There are some doctrines of the Bible that are very mysterious, some that we call high doctrines, but do not be afraid of them. Even babes in grace may understand the truth of God if they will but give their hearts to it—only be teachable and God, through His Word, and by the inward teaching of His Spirit, and by your own experience—will make you quite a great scholar yet in the mysteries of the kingdom. If you are but willing to learn, and especially if you are willing to put into practice the truths that you are taught, you will find that what I say is true. I pray you, endeavor to be intelligent Christians—seek to learn what Christ is ready to teach. He is your Master—be you His disciples. He is your Rabbi—be you His scholars. Sit at His feet and learn of Him.

But there is another meaning in our text upon which I shall enlarge a little. It is this. To “walk in the light of the LORD” means, *to have the joy of the Lord*. It is a very unhappy fact that there are some Christians—and we believe they are real Christians, too—who do not walk much in the light. I believe that there are thousands who are true believers in Christ, who yet live a great part of their days in the dark. They trust under the shadow of God’s wing and there they are safe—but they do not often get out into the light of His countenance.

Now that is a great pity. You know that if you were to go to Australia in a good sound ship, you would get there even if you were always to lie down in the hold among the luggage and the rats. But I should like to go in a first-class cabin, and I do not see why you and I, if we are going to heaven, should not go first-class. You would not think of taking a long railway journey in a luggage-van and I want you who are favored to be in Christ not to be satisfied with mere safety, but to look for joy and peace also. We may begin even here the music which we are to sing above. It is a pity that we should forego any of the privileges which really belong to us. So, beloved friends, if any of you are in the dark, let me say to you, in the words of the text, “Come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.”

What is the cause of your darkness? “Oh!” says one, “I am in the dark about my condition before God. I am a believer in Christ, but yet I fear that God is angry with me.” Now let me try to shed a little light upon you. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.” Our Lord Himself said, “He that

heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” He who believes in Christ Jesus is complete in Him. If you are, at this moment, resting alone in Christ, your condition before God is that of one whose transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered. You are, in the sight of God, clothed in the righteousness of Christ and therefore, you are comely and beautiful in His eyes despite all your spots and all your imperfections.

If you are a true believer, there will be many a battle within you, but that will not affect your standing before God. You are His child, one of His elect, upon whom His love has been set from all eternity—and that love never changes nor diminishes. Now in that light walk you and rejoice—imperfect, yet perfectly forgiven—sinning, and yet without spot before God—in yourself undone, but saved in Jesus Christ, in whom your soul has fixed her confidence.

Is the darkness that surrounds you caused by the dispensations of God’s providence? “I am very poor,” says one. “I am out of work, I have pressing claims that I cannot meet. I have a sick wife, I have a dying child.” Stop, dear friend, you have a long story to tell, and a sad one, too, but do you know that the light of God reveals many of the mysteries of His providence? Turn on the bull’s-eye of this lantern a minute. Here is a ray of its light, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

I want you to “walk in the light of the LORD” so as to be able to say, “If it is the will of God, it must be right. It could not be better, even though sometimes I have thought that it could not be worse. It is a rough road, but it is the right one, for it leads to the city of habitation. It is bitter physic, but its curing property is amazing.

*“Then come what may to me,
It will, it must be blest!
Home in the distance I can see;
There I shall be at rest.”*

But what is this darkness of your mind? Is it caused by a fierce struggle within you? Are you crying out, “I cannot understand how it is, but ever since I have been a Christian, I have felt my sin rising within me more than I ever did before. I am fighting from day to day to keep a hold on goodness at all”? Listen, dear friend, this is frequently the experience of a true child of God that, as soon as the new life is put into him, the old life begins to struggle against it. I dare to say that there never was a real Christian who has not had, in some measure at least, to cry out with Paul, “O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death.” They who say that the apostle was no Christian when he said that make me suspect whether they are themselves Christians, or have had any experience of what God’s children have to undergo.

The truth is that the more we seek holiness, the more we learn that we are not as holy as we want to be. And the man who is as good as he wants to be is not good at all. He who has climbed so high that he does not want to get any higher had better begin at the bottom, for he is under a sad delusion. So, be encouraged by the conflict in your heart and even take comfort from it. Be of good cheer, knowing that, as Christ overcame the world, and sin, and Satan, you also shall overcome them and be able to sing, “Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Once more, probably you are in the dark because you are afraid to die. Says one, “I tried myself, the other night, by asking, ‘Could you die without fear?’” That is a kind of test you need never put to yourself. Suppose Peter had been for weeks trying to see if he could walk on water? He could not have done it, but the instant that Christ bade him come to Him on the water, he could do it, but not previously.

John Bunyan, in his earlier days, imagined that, being a child of God, perhaps he could work miracles, so he thought he would say to one of the puddles in the road, “Be dry.” But he felt that he ought to pray first and as he could not find any promise that he should be able to do that sort of thing, the miracle never came off.

What is the good of your having the grace to die with if you are not going to die yet? When you come to die, if you believe in Christ, you may die without the slightest fear. You need to be a great deal more troubled about living than about dying—that is the far more serious thing of the two. Yet you need not be troubled about either living or dying when it is written, “Fear thou not; for I am with you: be not dismayed; for I am your God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.” “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” If I begin quoting the promises, I feel inclined to keep on, but you can find them for yourselves in the Word of God. You can feed upon them, live upon them, believe them, and act upon them, and in that way “walk in the light of the LORD” from day to day whatever happens to you.

Now come to this communion table in “the light of the LORD.” Come that you may remember your Savior’s death. Come saying, “He loved me and gave himself for me. I am my Beloved’s, His desire is toward me. I am coming to Him who has brought me into His banqueting house, and His banner over me is love.” He says to each believing soul, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore, with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Come to the table in the right spirit and this blessed ordinance will indeed prove to be a festival of love to your souls. God grant it, for Christ’s sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

ISAIAH 26

Verse 1. *In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.*

God is the great source of song. He “giveth songs in the night.” He can make the saddest heart to break forth into praise. One part of the prophecy concerning Christ’s coming was, “Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing.” The Lord might have caused us to utter nothing but groans if He had pleased, but instead of doing so, He delights to fill our mouths with joyous songs.

Let us from our heart sing this ancient song, “We have a strong city.” The church of God is a city which has a heavenly citizenship and other unique privileges—and it is wondrously protected, for the promise in this passage is now fulfilled, “salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.”

2. *Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.*

The city is not closed against the righteous and if we know and love the truth, and especially if we know and love Him who is the truth, the gates are always open to us and we may enter the city, enjoy its privileges, and share its protection.

3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,—*

“Peace, peace”—that is the form of the Hebrew, and it means a double peace, the perfection of peace—a great depth of peace, the reality of peace, peace upon peace belongs to the man who trusts in the Lord. Are you vexed, and worried, and perplexed, dear friend? Are you tossed to and fro as upon a stormy sea? This verse shows you the way in which you may obtain perfect peace, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace,”—

3-4. *Whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the LORD for ever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:*

Nothing can be too hard for Him, for He has “everlasting strength.” Nothing can ever happen in the future to overthrow Him, for His is not decaying strength, but “everlasting strength.” Hold on to that strength, you children of God. You may even suck honey out of this “Rock of Ages” (see margin) for there is indescribable sweetness in it. “Trust ye in the LORD for ever”—not only sometimes, but always, “for ever,” because there is strength in God forever.

5-6. *For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down, even the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy.*

You see, there is one city which God builds and another city which He pulls down. Observe this solemn truth, “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low”—that city which is perched on the hill of self-righteousness and lifted, as it were, almost to heaven by the pride of man—God will pull it down. It is part of God’s glory to lift up that which is down, and to cast down that which is up—for when men exalt themselves, they shall be abused—and when they humble themselves, they shall be exalted.

“He bringeth it even to the dust. The foot shall tread it down.” Oh, if there is anyone here who is trusting in himself, depending upon his own good doings and reckoning that he will be saved by his own merits, you will have to come down from that high place, my friend. That fine castle of yours will be left without one stone upon another, and the poorest child of God in all the world shall set his foot upon the loftiest pinnacle of your grand palace. God will bring it down so that “the feet of the poor, and the steps of the needy,” shall tread on it.

7. *The way of the just is uprightness:*

Or as it might be better rendered, “The way of the just is an even path.” The righteous shall steadily and safely stand in it, while others find themselves sometimes up and sometimes down, and their path shall be slippery and perilous.

7. *Thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just.*

God judges us by weight, not by appearance. Not by what we seem to be, but by what we are in the balances of the sanctuary.

8-9. *Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O LORD, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soul have I desired thee in the night;*

Some poor darkened spirit will, I trust, be able to join in this utterance of the prophet. It is nighttime with you now. You are not enjoying the light of God’s countenance, but be very thankful that you can say, “With my soul have I desired thee in the night.” If you are not a child of God, you will be able to do without God. But the fact that some of you cannot be happy unless you are living in the light of God’s love proves that you belong to Him. A child can be content without a stranger’s smile, but if the one who is looking at him is his father, just because he is his father’s child he must have the assurance of that father’s love or else he cannot be happy.

9-10. *Yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD.*

There are none so blind as those who will not see and there are plenty of such people about. They say that they cannot see this, and they cannot see that, but the truth is that they willfully shut their eyes and disregard the everlasting light.

11. *LORD, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see: but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy at the people; yea, the fire of thine enemies shall devour them.*

You know what our Lord Jesus said concerning the rich man, “In hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” He would not look at Lazarus while he was lying at his gates, but now he is obliged to look at Lazarus lying in Abraham’s bosom. He would not relieve him, nor give him even a crumb from his table, but now he begs that Lazarus may be sent to dip the tip of his finger in water, to cool his parched tongue. “They will not see” now. No, “but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envy” towards the people of the Lord.

12. *LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us:*

We may be attacked and assailed for a little while. We may be tossed to and fro, but “Thou wilt ordain peace for us.”

12. *For thou also hast wrought all our works in us.*

We have no works in which we can glory, for even if we have an abundance of good works, they are all God's work in us, and we give Him all the praise for them. And because He has thus wrought in us, we expect that He will give us peace.

13-15. *O LORD our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise: therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. Thou hast increased the nation, O LORD, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.*

The Jews were scattered and diminished. When they sinned against God, they were exiled, but when the Lord returned to them in favor, He multiplied them and brought them home again.

16. *LORD, in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them.*

And it was well for them that they did so. God's true child does not get angry against his Father when He whips him. But being chastened, he begins to pray and blessed is that chastening that drives us to our knees. "They poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them."

17-18. *Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.*

Here is the poor church of God in sore trouble. She says she has been disappointed, her bitterest pangs have not brought her what she expected. What shall happen then? God will interpose.

19. *Thy dead men shall live,—*

We shall rise with all that belong to Christ at the first and blessed resurrection, and all our dead hopes and our dead expectations shall rise too.

19. *Together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.*

As the soft showers cause the buried bulbs to spring up, so will God's gentle grace fall on men's hearts, and they shall arise, though they seemed to be dead before. And at the last great day, the sound of the archangel's trumpet shall be like a soft vernal shower which brings up the flowers of the earth and—

***"From beds of dust, and silent clay,
To realms of everlasting day,"***

the bodies of the saints shall rise. O blessed hope! Let us look for its fulfillment. Let us make this a part of our song. There is a city that has foundations, and there is a resurrection which will enable us to enter into that city, to dwell there forever. Oh, come let us sing of the New Jerusalem and of the white-robed multitudes that shall dwell therein forever.

20. *Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee:*

Enter into the secret chambers of communion with your Lord, where you shall be shut out from the world. Enter into the chambers of defense, where God will guard you. Enter into the chambers of devotion, where God shall meet with you.

20-21. *Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.*

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.